

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOGOTA 05430 01 OF 03 110321Z
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TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BOGOTA 5430

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y(MRN 5430 VICE 5439 AND SECTION INFO)

CARACAS FOR ASST SECY TODMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CO, SNAR, ASEC, PARM
SUBJECT: MRS. CARTER'S MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ

FOLLOWING IS TELEGRAPHIC MEMO OF CONVERSATION WHICH TOOK PLACE AT
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE FROM 11 AM TO 12:15 ON JUNE 10. MEMO IS SUBJECT T
O

APPROVAL BY MRS. CARTER'S PARTY. PARTICIPANTS WERE: PRESIDENT LOPEZ,
FOREIGN MINISTER LIEVANO, MRS. CARTER, ASST SECY TODMAN, CHARGE DREXLE
R,

AND MS HOYT AND MR. PASTOR.

1. AFTER AN EXCHANGE OF GREETINGS, PRES LOPEZ NOTED THAT MRS. CARTER
HAD RECEIVED LETTERS FROM THE OPPOSITION IN BRAZIL DURING HER VISIT
TO THAT COUNTRY. HE SAID HE HAD OFFERED BOTH BRANCHES OF THE COLOMBIA
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COMMUNIST PARTY THE OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNICATE COMPLAINTS TO
MRS. CARTER BUT THEY HAD DECLINED AND SAID THEY HAD NOT BEEN DELUSED
BY THE USG POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS. MRS. CARTER COMMENTED THAT
OF COURSE THE COLOMBIAN RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS WAS VERY GOOD.

2. MRS. CARTER OUTLINED FOR LOPEZ THE BACKGROUND TO HER TRIP AND
PRESIDENT CARTER'S OUTLOOK TOWARDS LATIN AMERICA. SHE UNDERLINED THE

PRESIDENT'S INTEREST IN WORKING CLOSELY WITH LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS IN COOPERATIVE EFFORTS AIMED AT RESOLVING REGIONAL AND BILATERAL PROBLEMS.

SHE EXPLAINED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION HAD ADOPTED A MORE OPEN APPROACH TO FOREIGN RELATIONS AND WOULD BE GOVERNED BY THE BELIEF THAT OUR FOREIGN POLICY NEEDS TO REFLECT OUR NATIONAL VALUES. WE WERE SEEKING A WIDER PARTICIPATION IN WORLD POLITICS AS WELL AS BROAD PROGRESS, ON A MULTILATERAL BASIS, IN HUMAN RIGHTS. PRESIDENT CARTER ALSO WANTS TO END THE SPECTRE OF WAR AND REDUCE THE WASTE OF RESOURCES IN ARMAMENTS. THE ADMINISTRATION WAS, IN PARTICULAR, SEEKING WIDER LATIN AMERICAN ADHERENCE TO THE TREATY OF TLAZELOLCO AND THE NPT. PRESIDENT LOPEZ REMARKED THAT THE USSR HAD ASKED COLOMBIA TO TAKE THE LEAD AMONG OTHER LA NATIONS IN PRESSING BRAZIL AND ARGENTINA TO RATIFY BOTH THESE TREATIES.

3. TURNING TO SPECIFIC MEASURES THE ADMINISTRATION HAD ALREADY TAKEN IN FURTHERING ITS LA POLICY OBJECTIVES, MRS CARTER CITED THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. SHE COMMENTED THAT SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS STILL REMAINED BUT THAT THERE HAD ALSO BEEN GOOD PROGRESS AND THAT WE HOPED FOR AN AGREEMENT BY THE END OF THIS SUMMER.

SHE THANKED LOPEZ FOR THE HELP HE HAD ALREADY RENDERED IN FACILITATING AN AGREEMENT AND ASKED HIM TO IMPRESS UPON TORRIJOS THE NEED FOR REACHING AGREEMENT ON A NEW TREATY BEFORE THE SUMMER WAS OVER. LOPEZ SAID HE HAD NOT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH TORRIJOS RECENTLY BUT ADDED THAT HE HIMSELF WAS "QUITE OPTIMISTIC" ABOUT THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. RETITERATING COMMENTS HE HAD MADE EARLIER TO AMBASSADORS

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BUNKER AND LINOWITZ, LOPEZ SAID THAT ONLY THE USG WAS IN A POSITION TO

GUARANTEE THE SECURITY AND NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL FOR THE OTHER NATIONS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. HE SAID HE HAD TOLD TORRIJOS THAT PANAMA SHOULD POSSESS THE AREA'S RESOURCES AND THE US SHOULD HOLD THE GUARANTEE.

4. REGARDING OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH CUBA, MRS. CARTER REPORTED THAT PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE BUT PROBLEMS REMAINED. SHE UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FACT THAT WE AT LEAST HAD OPENED A DIALOGUE WITH CASTRO. LOPEZ CHARACTERIZED CASTRO'S LATEST SPEECH ON RELATIONS WITH THE US AS "TRICKY".

5. RESUMING HER OUTLINE OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S APPROACH TO FOREIGN RELATIONS, MRS. CARTER SAID WE WERE ALSO SEEKING BETTER INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS SINCE THOSE EXISTING WERE FORMED AT THE TIME OF WORLD WAR II AND HAD BEEN OVERTAKEN BY SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS. SHE REITERATED THAT WE WOULD BE CONSULTING

CLOSELY WITH LA NATIONS IN DEVELOPING
OUR GLOBAL POLICIES AND IN ATTACKING WORLD PROBLEMS. LOPEZ
COMMENTED THAT IF THERE IS ANY NATIONA WITH WHICH THE US HS NO
PROBLEMS, IT IS COLOMBIA.

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EXDIS

CARACAS FOR ASST SECY TODMAN

6. DEVELOPING FURTHER HER EARLIER COMMENTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS,
MRS. CARTER SAID THAT ON HER TRIP SHE HAD ENCMUNTERED A FAR BETTER
RESPONSE THAN SHE HAD EXPECTED TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S
POLICY. SHE SENSED A NEW SPIRIT AND POPULAR INTEREST WITH REGARD
TO SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND SAID THAT IN VIEW OF
COLOMBIA'S GOOD EXPERIENCE WE WOULD WELCOME LOPEZ' SUGGESTIONS
ON HOW TO PROCEED. LOPEZ OBSERVED THAT THE CLIMATE FOR FURTHERING
THE CAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS SEEMED GOOD. HE COMMENTED THAT MOST
GOVERNMENTS IN THE WORLD, AND PARTICULARLY IN LATIN AMERICA,
WERE SUFFERING FROM UNPOPULARITY BECAUSE OF INFLATION AND
A NUMBER OF OTHER REASONS. IN THE DEMOCRACIES,
PEOPLE WERE CALLING FOR STRONGER, MORE EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT
WHEREAS IN THE MILITARY REGIMES, THE PEOPLE WANTED DEMOCRACY.
IN THE LATER NATIONS, THE REGIMES WERE BEING FORCED TO
PROMISE ELECTIONS AND OTHER CHANGES IN THE NEXT YEARS AHEAD
IN ORDER TO CALM THEIR PEOPLE. AND THIS CLIMATE,
IN LOPEZ' VIEW, COULD BE PROPITIOUS FOR ADVANCING THE CAUSE OF
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THOSE COUNTRIES. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER,
THAT IT WOULD BE HARD, AND INADVISABLE, FOR THE US TO ACT AS A
"PROTECTOR" OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN LA PARTICULARLY SINCE THIS WAS
REALLY THE COLLECTIVE OBLIGATION OF THE OAS AND UN. HE ARGUED
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FOR THE DESIGNATION OF A LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WITHIN THE OAS FRAMEWORK. LOPEZ ENVISIONED THE APPOINTMENT OF SOME DISTINGUISHED STATESMAN TO FILL THIS ROLE AND THOUGHT IT MIGHT EVEN BE A CANADIAN, WHO WOULD HAVE SPECIAL CLAIMS TO OBJECTIVITY. HE ADDED THAT THIS OFFICIAL SHOULD NOT BE TERMED A "SECRETARY GENERAL" BECAUSE THIS TITLE SOUNDED FAR LESS IMPOSING IN SPANISH THAN IN ENGLISH. LOPEZ REFERRED TO RECENT MOVES BY SOME SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES TO FORM A BLOC COUNTERING US EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY ALLEGING THAT THEY CONSTITUTED "INTERVENTION." IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, LOPEZ AND LIEVANO INDICATED THAT THESE MOVES WERE STILL UNDER WAY BUT THAT COLOMBIA HAD NOT BEEN WELCOME AS A PARTICIPANT. WHEN ASKED WHAT DEMOCRATIC NATIONS MIGHT DO TO COUNTER SUCH MOVES ON THE PART OF SOUTHERN CONE NATIONS, LOPEZ UNDERLINED THAT BOTH COLOMBIA AND VENEZUELA HAD REFUSED TO JOIN IN AND THAT THE GOC, AS HE HAD MENTIONED PREVIOUSLY, WAS ADVOCATING A COLLECTIVE APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING HUMAN RIGHTS AND AN IMPARTIAL LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSIONER AS AN "OMBUDSMAN."

7. TURNING TO THE QUESTION OF NARCOTICS, MRS. CARTER SAID THE PRESIDENT WAS SERIOUSLY CONCERNED ABOUT DRUG ABUSE AND ACCORDINGLY HAD ESTABLISHED A SPECIAL WHITE HOUSE OFFICE ON THE PROBLEM, HEADED BY DR. BOURNE, WHO WAS VERY CLOSE TO THE CARTERS. SHE REMINDED LOPEZ THAT DR. BOURNE AND MS. FALCO,

THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S SPECIAL ADVISER ON NARCOTICS, PLANNED TO VISIT COLOMBIA SHORTLY. MRS. CARTER EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT PRESIDENT LOPEZ WOULD MEET WITH BOURNE AND FALCO TO DISCUSS HOW OUR COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS COULD BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE. LOPEZ STATED THAT THERE WERE FEW THINGS THAT HAD DISAPPOINTED HIM AS MUCH AS HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE USG WITH REGARD TO NARCOTICS CONTROL. HE SAID THE QUESTION WAS WHETHER COLOMBIA WAS CORRUPTING THE US OR VICE VERSA. IN THIS CONNECTION, HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS AMERICAN MONEY, CHANNELS AND AIRCRAFT THAT WERE BEING USED IN

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NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING INVOLVING COLOMBIAN TERRITORY. HE REFERRED TO HIS CONVERSATIONS NEARLY THREE YEARS AGO WITH PRESIDENT FORD AND SECY KISSINGER WHO, HE SAID, PROMISED TO HELP COLOMBIA WITH THE EQUIPMENT IT NEEDED TO FIGHT THE TRAFFICKERS, INCLUDING HELICOPTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS GEAR. MUCH TIME HAD ELAPSED SINCE THEN AND WE WERE STILL DEBATING THE TERMS OF AN AGREEMENT TO SUPPLY JUST THREE HELICOPTERS.

8. MRS. CARTER SAID THE ADMINISTRATION RECOGNIZED THE ROLE OF THE AMERICAN FOMESTIC MARKET FTR DRUGS BUT SHE STRESSED THAT IN THIS INTERDEPENDENT WORLD IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONFINE RESPONSIBILITY IN SUCH A MATTER TO ONE COUNTRY. SHE WENT ON TO OBSERVE THAT THE NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING HAD HAD A CORRUPTING INFLUENCE ON THE GOC. BOTH LOPEZ AND LIEVANO SAID THEY ENTIRELY AGREED WITH MRS. CARTER BUT THEY STRESSED THAT THE GOC DOES NOT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE TRAFFICKERS AND THAT THE PROMISED USG HELP HAD NEVER COME. MRS. CARTER COMMENTED THAT THE SOURCES OF THIS TRAFFICKING PROBLEM CAN BE FOUND IN BOTH THE US AND COLOMBIA AND THAT WE NEEDED TO WORK TOGETHER. LOPEZ OBSERVED THAT WE SHOULD HAVE BEGUN DOING SO THREE YEARS AGO. HE WENT ON TO DESCRIBE THE GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS WHICH FAVORED TRAFFICKING FROM THE NORTHEAST PART OF COLOMBIA.

HE ADDED THAT RECENTLY DISCOVERED PLANTATIONS FOR GROWING MARIHUANA USED ADVANCED AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY FINANCED BY AMERICANS.

MRS. CARTER REITERATED THAT CORRUPTION WAS LIMITINV THE EFFECTIVENESS OF COLOMBIAN ENFORCEMENT ACTION. LOPEZ AGAIN AGREED AND EMPHASIZED THE GOC'S NEED FOR MORE AND BETTER EQUIPMENT. MRS. CARTER REPEATED THAT SHE HOPED PRESIDENT LOPEZ WOULD MEET WITH BOURNE AND FALCO WHEN THEY VISITED COLOMBIA. LOPEZ SAID THE GOC WANTED TO COOPERATE AND FIGHT ALONGSIDE THE US IN THIS BATTLE AGAINST THE TRAFFICKERS.

9. MRS. CARTER NEXT REGISTERED THE ADMINISTRATION' S CONCERN OVER
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EXDIS

CARACAS FOR ASST. SECY TODMAN

AMERICAN PRISONERS, LIKE THELEN, WHO HAD BEEN HELD IN COLOMBIA FOR VERY LONG PERIODS WITHOUT BEING BROUGHT TO TRIAL. SHE RELATED THIS TO OUR CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS AND UNDERLINED THE INTEREST IN SUCH CASES IN THE US. LOPEZ REPLIED THAT HUMAN RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA ARE PROTECTED BY LAW, THAT THE LAWS NEED TO BE ENFORCED BY AN INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY AND THAT THE COLOMBIAN EXECUTIVE BRANCH CANNOT MANIPULATE THE JUDICIAL PROCESS BECAUSE THAT WOULD IN FACT BE A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. MRS. CARTER REITERATED THE CONCERN THAT WERE FELT IN THE US WITH REGARD TO PERSONS WHO HAD BEEN HELD SEVERAL YEARS WITHOUT TRIAL. LOPEZ ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WERE DELAY AND BACKLOGS AND SAID THE COLOMBIAN ATTORNEY GENERAL HAD RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN TO TRY TO SPEED UP SOME 8000 PROTRACTED CASES WHICH WERE PENDING TRIAL. HE ALSO OBSERVED THAT SUCH BACKLOGS AND JUDICIAL BURDENS WERE A PROBLEM IN OTHER COUNTRIES, TOO, INCLUDING THE US.

10. REGARDING THE STARR KIDNAPPING CASE, MRS. CARTER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE GOC'S HELP AND CONCERN AND VOICED THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TOWARDS SECURING STARR'S SAFE RELEASE. LOPEZ SAID THE GUERRILLAS SEEMED TO BE HOLDING CONFIDENTIAL

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HIM IN THE REMOTE EL PATO AREA AND THAT IF GOC ARMED FORCES TRIED TO RESCUE HIM THERE IT WOULD ENDANGER HIS LIFE. HE STRESSED THAT IN SUCH CASES IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO BE PATIENT, AND HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT STARR'S MOTHER RECOGNIZED THE DANGERS OF TRYING TO FORCE THE ISSUE BY THE USE OF ARMED FORCE. MRS. CARTER UNDERLINED THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS VERY CLOSE TO THE PEACE CORPS, PARTICULARLY SINCE HIS MOTHER HAD ALSO SERVED AS A PC VOLUNTEER.

11. MRS. CARTER ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY MESSAGES OR THOUGHTS WHICH PRESIDENT LOPEZ WISHED HER TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT CARTER. IN REPLY, LOPEZ RAISED THE ISSUE OF TRADE PREFERENCES AND TARIFFS. REITERATING THE LIEVANO PLAN FOR A LATIN AMERICAN REGIONAL SYSTEM IN WHICH THE US WOULD FAVOR ITS SOUTHERN NEIGHBORS IN THE HEMISPHERE, LOPEZ SAID THE GOC EITHER WANTED BETTER TREATMENT FROM THE US OR HELP IN SECURING EQUAL TREATMENT FOR ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FROM ALL OF THE DEVELOPED NATIONS. HE HAD IN MIND THE FACT THAT COLOMBIA SUFFERED

DISCRIMINATION IN TERMS OF MARKET AVAILABILITY
FROM THE NATIONS IN THE LOME AGREEMENT AND THE BRITISH
COMMONWEALTH. MRS CARTER SAID THE US WANTED TO WORK WITH THE
COLOMBIANS VIA THE MTN IN GENEVA TO REDUCE REGIONAL DISCRIMINATION.
WE THOUGHT THIS FAR BETTER THAN CREATING NEW REGIONAL TRADING
SYSTEMS (AS ENVISAGED IN THE LIEVANO PLAN). LOPEZ
OBSERVED THAT THE DEVELOPING NATIONS WERE IN THE MINORITY IN
THE MTN AT GENEVA AND THAT IN PARTICULAR THERE WERE ONLY A
HANDFUL OF LA NATIONS PARTICIPATING. HE WENT ON TO THANK THE
CARTER ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS ENLIGHTENED ACTION ON SHOE
IMPORTS AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT IT WOULD TAKE
SIMILAR POSITION IN REGARD TO EFFORTS TO CURTAIL COLOMBIAN
CUTFLOWER IMPORTS. LOPEZ AND LIEVANO WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT
THEY DID NOT REGARD AN INCREASE IN COLOMBIAN EXPORTS TO THE US AS
A FORM OF INCREASED ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE ON THE US. LOPEZ ALSO
OBSERVED THAT IF THERE WAS A WORLD WIDE SYSTEM OF PREFERENCE
OPEN TO ALL COUNTRIES WHICH FIRST RENOUNCED THE PREFERENCES
THEY RECEIVED UNDER CLOSED, REGIONAL SYSTEMS, THERE WOULD
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BE A CONTINUING MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE LATER, GLOBAL SYSTEM AND
AWAY FROM THE OTHERS.

12. LOPEZ ALSO WARNED THAT ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS POLITICAL/
ECONOMIC PROBLEMS THAT WOULD CONFRONT THE US WITHIN THE NEXT
FEW YEARS WOULD RESULT FROM THE ANTICIPATED DROP IN COFFEE PRICES.
HE SAID COLOMBIA HAD TAKEN MEASURES WHICH WOULD MITIGATE THE
IMPACT HERE BUT THAT MOST OTHER COFFEE EXPORTING
NATIONS HAD NOT DONE SO AND HAD PEGGED THEIR INTERNAL
PRICES TO THE INTERNATIONAL PRICE. THEY THUS FACED SEVERE ECONOMIC
DISLOCATIONS, UNEMPLOYMENT AND CONSEQUENT POLITICAL
DISRUPTION WHEN THE PRICE FALLS AND THE US WOULD HAVE TO COPE,
ESPECIALLY IN CENTRAL AMERICA, WITH THE POLITICAL
PROBLEMS THIS CAUSED.

13. IN CONCLUSION, MRS. CARTER STATED THAT THE
ADMINISTRATION WAS COMMITTED TO COMPLETE THE PAN AMERICAN
HIGHWAY SEGMENT IN COLOMBIA BUT WAS WORRIED BY LACK OF
PROGRESS IN CURBING HOOF AND MOUTH DISEASE. SHE EXPRESSED
THE HOPE THAT PRES LOPEZ WOULD GIVE THIS PROBLEM HIS PERSONAL
ATTENTION. PRES LOPEZ GOOD NATUREDLY TOLD MRS. CARTER TO ADVISE
HER HUSBAND NOT TO WASTE HIS TIME WORRYING ABOUT
THIS ISSUE. LOPEZ SAID HE HAD BEEN LISTENING TO TALK ABOUT
COMPETING THE HIGHWAY FOR MANY YEARS BUT THAT MEANWHILE ONLY
THE CONSTRUCTION COST HAS GONE UP. HE COMMENTED THAT IT
WAS ALL A COMPLICATED PROBLEM WITH MANY CONFLICTING INTERESTS
INVOLVED.

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